

setting a user's standard rest time or a rest interval time by the server device;
sending an instruction for melody sound to the terminal device; and
receiving the sent instruction for the melody sound by the terminal device to ring a rest promoting melody sound for urging a worker's rest by an attached sound source device.

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REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-21 and 23-40 are presented for consideration, with Claims 1 and 21 being independent.

The independent claims have been amended to further distinguish Applicants' invention from the cited art.

In view of the amendments shown above and the following remarks, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103 as set forth in the Office Action of March 8, 2002, are respectfully requested.

In that regard, Claims 1-5, 8-13, 16, 21-25 and 28-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being obvious over Ludwig 294. In addition, Claims 6, 7, 18-20, 26, 27 and 38-40 were rejected as allegedly being obvious over Ludwig in view of Brunson '823, and Claims 14, 15, 17, 34, 35 and 37 were rejected as allegedly being obvious over Ludwig and further in view of Palmer '683.

Claim 1 of Applicants' invention relates to a distributed office system provided with terminal device installed for a plurality of users, and a server device connected to the terminal devices via a communication channel, for displaying information on a screen of a

terminal device of each of the users. The system includes working situation display means for collectively displaying an information aggregate including at least two types of information for each user, including the user's working situation image, and character information concerning the user's working situation on the screen of the terminal device of the user. In addition, a virtual room display means displays, for each user, diagram images indicating the user's virtual single room office on the screen of the terminal device of the user. As amended, Claim 1 recites that the character information is updated on the basis of each user's operation.

Claim 21 relates to a method of managing a distributed office system provided with terminal devices installed for a plurality of users, and a server device connected to the terminal device via a communication channel for displaying information on a screen of the terminal device of the user in the distributed office system. The method includes the steps of displaying diagram images for each user indicating a user's virtual single room office on the screen of the terminal device of the user, and collectively displaying an information aggregate of at least two types of information. As claimed, the displayed information includes a user's working situation image and character information concerning the user's working situation. Claim 21, similarly to Claim 1, has been amended to include the step of updating the character information on the basis of each user's operation.

In accordance with Applicants' claimed invention, a distributed office system is capable of displaying pertinent information about each user, including updated character information, and also a virtual single room office for each user.

The applied art to Ludwig, Brunson and Palmer was thoroughly discussed in the Request for Reconsideration filed June 10, 2002, and those comments are incorporated herein by reference.

With respect to the primary citation, i.e., Ludwig, it is not understood to provide any teaching or suggestion, inter alia, of displaying character information concerning a user's working situation and updating the character information based on each user's operation as provided in Applicants' claimed invention. Although Ludwig may be read to provide user's information, this patent does not disclose using character information concerning a user's working situation or updating this information based on each user's operation.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 1-5, 8-13, 16, 21-25 and 28-33 under 35 U.S.C. §103 is respectfully requested.

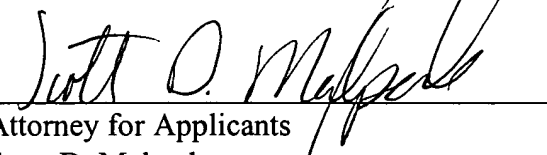
The secondary citations fail to compensate for the deficiencies in Ludwig as discussed in the Request for Reconsideration. Therefore, even assuming, arguendo, Ludwig could have been combined with Brunson or Palmer as suggested in the Office Action, such combinations still fail to teach or suggest Applicants' claimed invention. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the remaining claims under 35 U.S.C. §103 are respectfully requested.

Accordingly, it is submitted that Applicants' invention as set forth in independent Claims 1 and 21 is patentable over the cited art. In addition, dependent Claims 3-20 and 23-40 set forth additional features of Applicants' invention. Independent consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

Due consideration and prompt passage to issue are respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C.
office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our
below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE TO CLAIMS

1. (Twice Amended) A distributed office system provided with terminal devices installed for a plurality of users, and a server device connected to the terminal devices via a communication channel, for displaying information on a screen of a terminal device of each of the users, comprising:

working situation display means for collectively displaying an information aggregate including at least two types of information for each user, including the user's working situation image, and character information concerning the user's working situation on the screen of the terminal device of the user; and

virtual room display means for displaying, for each user, diagram images indicating the user's virtual single-room office on the screen of the terminal device of the user,

wherein the character information is updated on the basis of each user's operation.

21. (Twice Amended) A method of managing a distributed office system provided with terminal devices installed for a plurality of users, and a server device connected to the terminal devices via a communication channel for displaying information on a screen of the terminal device of the user in the distributed office system, comprising the steps of:

displaying diagram images for each user indicating a user's virtual single-room office on the screen of the terminal device of the user;

collectively displaying an information aggregate of at least two types of information, for each diagram image including a user's working situation image, and character information concerning the user's working situation; and
updating character information on the basis of each user's operation.